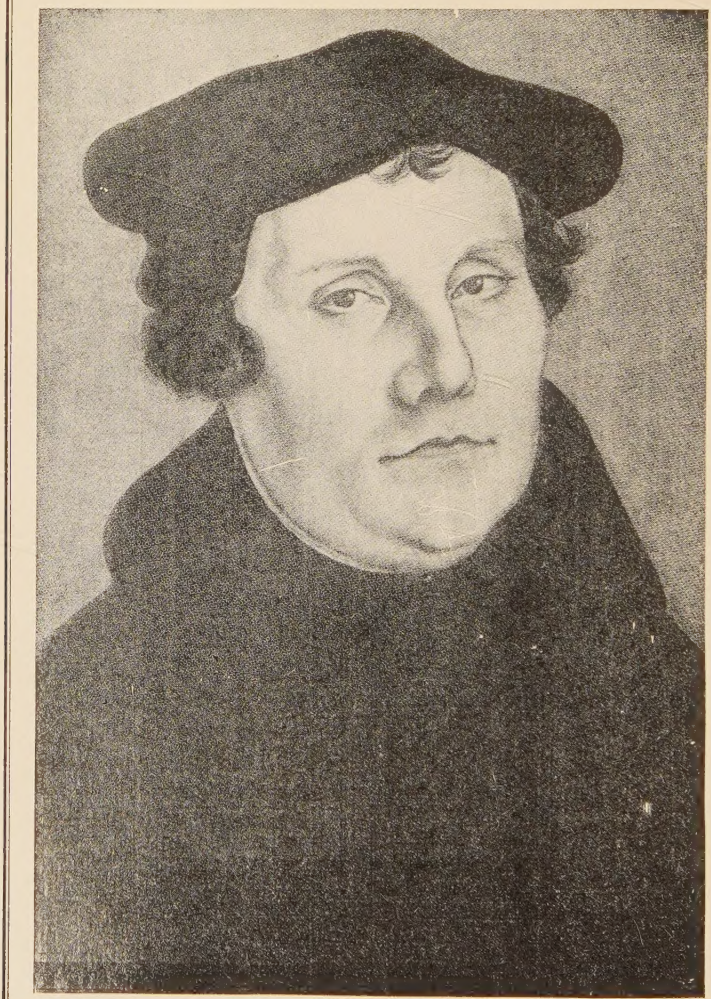
LUTHER'S
SMALL CATECHISM
1529-1929



DR. MARTIN LUTHER

PAINTING OF CRANACH (?)

1529

ORIGINAL AT FLORENCE

LUTHER'S
SMALL CATECHISM

A NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION PREPARED
BY AN INTERSYNODICAL COMMITTEE
[With an historical introduction]
A JUBILEE OFFERING

1529 - 1929

MINNEAPOLIS
AUGSBURG PUBLISHING HOUSE
1929

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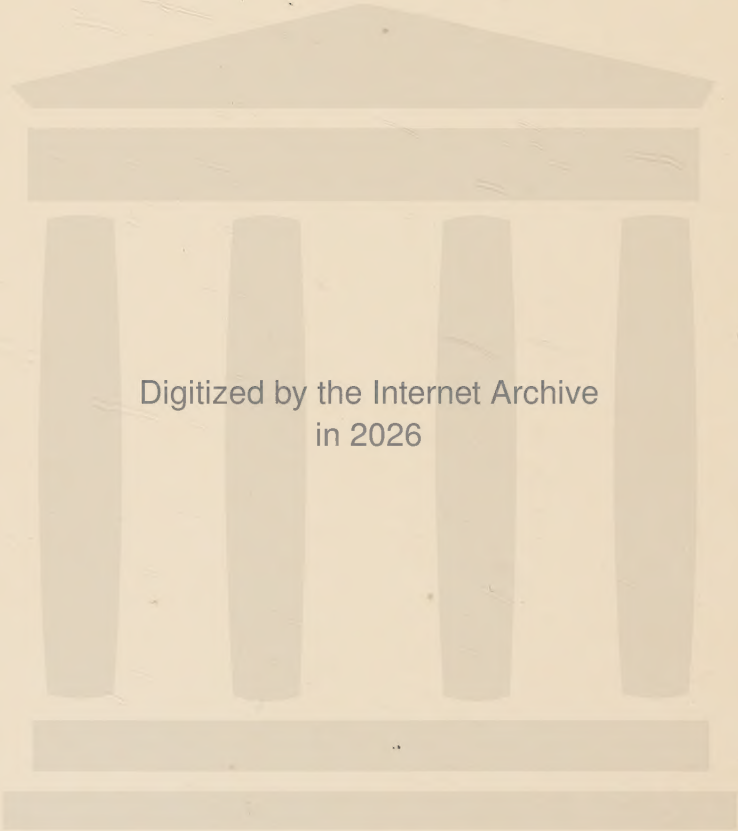
LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM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PREFACE

In the past the lack of an English translation of Luther's Small Catechism that is entirely satisfactory has been generally recognized. There have indeed been numerous translations of the Catechism but many of them were so free that they failed to reproduce the entire thought of the original, while others were so literal that the English language was made to suffer severely. With the multiplication of translations an unfortunate confusion has also arisen in the practical work of the Church, as almost every Lutheran Synod has put forth some version of its own. Time and again it has been asked whether it would not be possible to reproduce the treasured riches of the Catechism in idiomatic English and whether some way could not be found to secure a single translation that might gain the approval of all the branches of the Church, so that the Church might possess a uniform English Catechism as well as a uniform Common Service. The approach of the four hundredth anniversary of the publication of the Small Catechism particularly helped to arouse a fresh interest in the whole question.

The credit for taking the initiative in the present undertaking belongs to the Scandinavian synods. As early as 1922, a motion was made at the convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church that a jubilee edition of Luther's Small Catechism be printed, and it was resolved "to begin negotiations with other Lutheran church bodies with the view of editing a uniform English text of the Catechism." Under instructions from

the Board of Elementary Christian Education of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Rev. J. N. Andersen, the synodical director of this work, made arrangements for a meeting with representatives of the Augustana Synod and of the United Danish Lutheran Church. The "Joint Committee," under which name these representatives had organized, resolved on November 11, 1924, "to approach all the Lutheran synodical bodies of America with the proposition of uniting on a uniform jubilee edition of Luther's Small Catechism." On March 6, 1925, the presidents of all the Lutheran general bodies of America were informed of this action. In addition to this, the Rev. Mr. Andersen personally visited nearly all the presidents in order to interest them in this important work and to win their co-operation. All expressed their willingness to co-operate and some even induced their synods to adopt appropriate resolutions. Unfortunately Dr. Pfotenhauer, the president of the Missouri Synod, felt constrained to decline to participate in an official way. The other presidents appointed representatives who were to become members of the projected committee of translators. On Feb. 16, 1925, the committee held its initial meeting at Chicago, and organized by electing the Rev. J. N. Andersen president and the Rev. Em. Poppen secretary.

The first question that had to be considered was the exact German text that was to be used as the basis of the English translation. Dr. Reu was requested to prepare a complete and thorough discussion of this question to be submitted at the following meeting. In conformity with the wishes of the Committee this was done and the article was subsequently printed, in somewhat enlarged form *(A New English Translation of Luther's Small Catechism,* by M. Reu, Wartburg Publishing House). It was there shown that the first com-

plete edition of Luther's Small Catechism was that of 1531, where we find the beautiful explanation of the Introduction to the Lord's Prayer for the first time, as well as the statement dealing with Confession, inserted between the fourth and fifth parts (cf. Mueller, *Symbolische Buecher,* p. 363 f.). Furthermore, the edition of 1531 is the last that Luther personally supervised as the additions and subtractions of subsequent editions were only the result of printer's or proof reader's whims. So the Committee resolved to use the edition of 1531 as the proper original for translation.

This edition is the one on which the oldest Scandinavian translations were based. The first official translation of the Catechism for Denmark and Norway, prepared by Petrus Palladius and printed in 1538, together with Bugenhagen's preface of May 13, was based upon the edition of 1531 (cf. A. Chr. Bang, *Dokumenter og Studier vedrørende den lutherske katekismus' historie i Nordens kirker,* I, Christiania, 1893, pp. 193-230). The same is true of the oldest Swedish translation which we find in H. Lundstroem, *Historisk-Kritisk Utredning angående Luthers Lilla Katekes,* Stockholm, 1917, in the form of a reprint of 1567.

In three particulars, however, it was decided to depart from the edition of 1531. (1) The words, "I am the Lord thy God," though missing in all editions between 1529 and 1546, were inserted for the sake of completeness; (2) the second section of the part "Of Confession" was omitted (cf. Mueller, *Symbolische Buecher,* p. 363 f.) because its character is liturgical rather than catechetical; (3) quotations from the Scriptures which occur in the Catechism were not translated from the German but have almost invariably been given in the words of the Authorized Version.

Bearing these principles in mind the reason for the

omission of "The Office of the Keys," which Luther never wrote, and for the wording of certain commandments will be perfectly clear. A full discussion of the textual principles involved together with a complete critical apparatus, which includes a large body of citations from the various Latin and English translations, will be found in the pamphlet of Dr. Reu.

The preliminary translation was prepared by a subcommittee consisting of Doctors Fahlund, Mattes, Mellby and Sheatsley. This translation was thoroughly discussed and amended at the plenary meetings of the Committee and was then published in pamphlet form in the Fall of 1927. This provisional edition has been again amended with special reference to the many suggestions and criticisms that were received from all portions of the Church, and it is now offered to the Church in the hope that we may finally attain to one English form of the Catechism.

May the blessing of God rest upon this undertaking and may it serve, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, to bring about a deeper appreciation and a greater love for this beautiful statement of the one true faith, which, after four centuries, is still a living witness and a glorious treasure of the Church.

J. N. Andersen, chairman, Norwegian Lutheran Church
Em. Poppen, D.D., secretary, Joint Synod of Ohio
G. A. Fahlund, D.D., Augustana Synod
S. J. Sebelius, D.D., Augustana Synod
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J. Sheatsley, D.D., Joint Synod of Ohio
Geo. Sverdrup, Lutheran Free Church
C. A. Mellby, Ph.D., Norwegian Lutheran Church
G. A. Getty, D.D., United Lutheran Church
John C. Mattes, D.D., United Lutheran Church

Committee

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

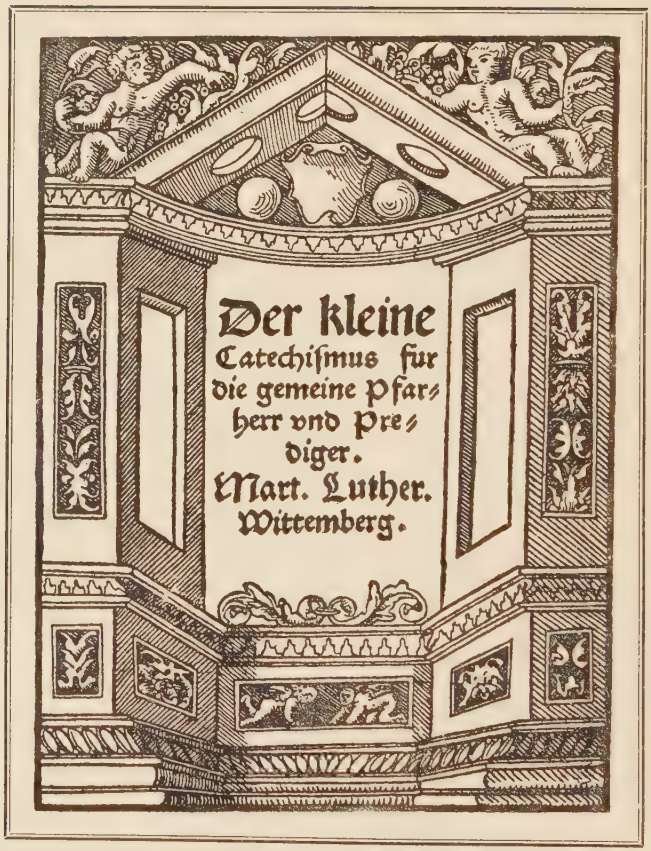
Deudsch
Catechis=
mus.
Mart. Luther.

Chapter One

THE ORIGIN OF THE GREATEST SMALL BOOK IN THE WORLD

WHEN a little manual of the Christian faith has survived four centuries and during all that time has remained a vital force in the Church; when it is valued today not as a venerable memorial of the past but as a living text that grips the hearts and recollections of millions of common folk; when a book that was intended primarily for the needs of a small principality has established its value for the whole world so that it is in more extensive use than any similar manual, we cannot escape the question as to how this thing has come to pass.

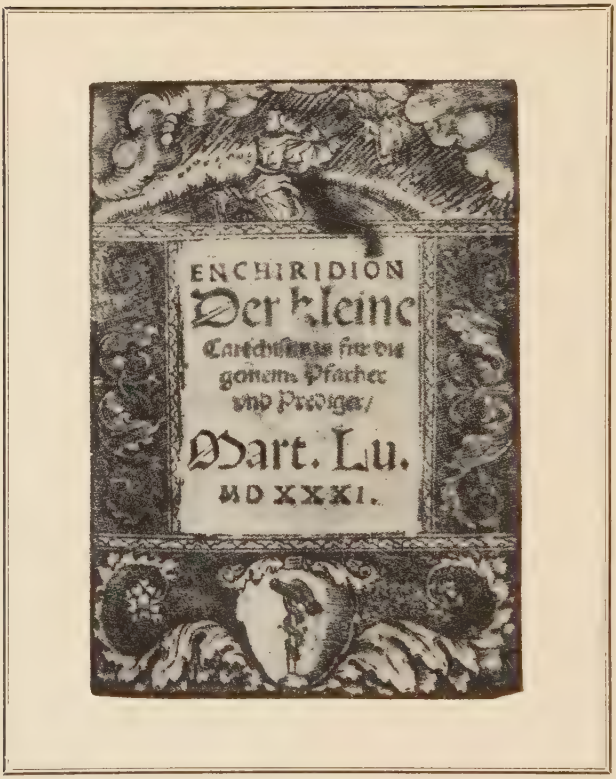
There must be something unique in the origin of a book that rides thus securely over the vast sea of time, where the great mass of ephemeral literature is so quickly submerged and on whose surface even some of the finest products of the human mind float aimlessly, like unguided derelicts. A book that lives in spite of passing centuries and changing theologies must have within it not only a great purpose but a spark of heavenly flame; it must have come into being not only through the keen observation of genius but under the guidance of a divine influence. Great books are


Der kleine
Catechiſmus für
die gemeine Pfar-
herr vnd Pre-
diger.
Mart. Luther.
Wittemberg.

not manufactured, they spring spontaneously out of the needs of the occasion and owe their being to the inner necessities of the authors' souls.

Two widely read productions of a previous age may well illustrate this fact. The *Summa theologica* of Thomas Aquinas has indeed been kept alive after a fashion through the artificial respiration of papal commendation, but it enjoys, at best, only a very spectral semblance of life. It stirs men's hearts no more than the demonstrations of Euclid, for despite its keen logic, its manifest intellectual brilliancy and its subtile dialectics, it bears all too clearly the impress of manufacture. It needs no title page or colophon to prove that it was fabricated with calm deliberation. In striking contrast is the deep impression made on the reader by the *Confessions* of St. Augustine. Here is something God-given; it is a profoundly moving narrative of the working of God's Spirit in the troubled soul of the great Bishop of Hippo. But even this book has a very limited appeal. It is very precious to the theologian, the mystic and the deeply pious, but it cannot long hold the attention of a child or of the wayfaring man.

The appeal of Luther's Small Catechism is universal. The learned theologian and the unlettered boor, the experienced man of affairs and the little child alike treasure its profound simplicity. It is no archeological curiosity but a living voice that is just as clear and resonant as it was four centuries ago and which now, as then, carries the conviction with it that here a man speaks what God has put into his heart to utter.



But it is done in so objective a way that the man is forgotten. The explanation of the Second Article of the Creed has become so completely the personal property of innumerable Christians that they never think of the author; it has become their own *Credo*. Elsewhere Luther has told us of his inner spiritual struggles, of the agonies of the cloister and the doubts that perplexed his soul before he learned the true meaning of the "justice of God" and had found his way to peace by the free and unmerited forgiveness

of sins through Jesus Christ; here we have only the triumphant results of all that travail.

But this beautiful statement of his faith did not come till more than a decade after he had found it, when a combination of circumstances finally brought it to this perfect form. Unexpected revelations of the bitter spiritual poverty of the times made it clear that he must give the best he had found, in the simplest possible form, to those who needed it most. Not the requirements of the University, nor the queries of the intellectuals, but the crying needs of the poor and despised of the earth caused the writing of the greatest religious classic outside the canon of Holy Scripture. To understand the immediate occasion for its appearance we must turn back to the activities of the preceding years.

For several centuries it had been customary to make the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer the basis of oral catechetical instruction. Unfortunately much other material was added which only served to obscure its purpose. When the duty of instructing the people was thrust upon him it was quite natural that Luther should begin with the accustomed materials, simply eliminating the later accretions. So during a period of thirteen years of pastoral activity he published a number of books dealing with those primitive elements and in which much that was finally incorporated in the Small Catechism can be seen in its beginnings.

The start was made in the summer of 1516 when, as substitute for Simon Heinz, the pastor of the town

church, he preached a series of sermons on the Ten Commandments. When these were finished in February, 1517, they were followed, during Lent, by a series on the Lord's Prayer, and, in the same year, he wrote a brief explanation of the Commandments as an aid to those who would come to confession. In 1518 he had this explanation printed in German and Latin with the title *Kurze Erklaerung der* 10 *Gebote,* and then, with some revisions issued the sermons of 1516 and 1517 as *Decem praecepta Wittenbergensi praedicata populo.* In 1519 the sermons on the Lord's Prayer that had been preached two years before appeared as an *Auslegung des Vaterunsers fuer die einfältigen Laien,* and this was followed in the same year by two little treatises on the same theme, *Eine kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen und zu beten,* and *Auslegung des Vaterunsers fuer sich und hinter sich,* which grew out of practical explanations he had given during evening hours to the young and unlettered (*pueris et rudibus*). In 1520 Luther collected the results of his previous catechetical work and added a third part on the Creed, publishing the whole under the title, *Eine kurze Form der zehn Gebote; eine kurze Form des Glaubens; eine kurze Form des Vaterunsers.* This was also intended as a guide for those who came to confession and, besides furnishing his first explanation of the Creed which has the grouping into three Articles instead of the traditional twelve, it is interesting because of the explanation he gives for the order of the component parts. This explanation is sufficiently important for the understand-

ing of Luther's catechetical purposes that we will give it in his own words.

"There are three things," he says, "that everyone must know to be saved. First, he must know what he ought to do and what he must leave undone. Then, as he discovers that it is impossible for him to accomplish either with his own strength, he must know where to obtain, where to seek and find the power that will enable him to do his duty. And, in the third place, he must know how to seek and obtain that aid. Just as a sick person needs first of all to learn the nature of his illness that he may guide his actions accordingly. Then he must learn where the medicine that will make a healthy man of him may be obtained. In the third place he must desire the remedy, seek it and obtain it, or have it brought to him. So the Commandments show each one the nature of his sickness, that he may realize what he is able to do or leave undone and that he may understand his sinful and evil nature. After that faith instructs him where he may find the remedy, the grace that shall help him to become godly and to keep the Commandments, and which reveals to him God and His mercy as it is manifested and offered in Christ. In the third place, the Lord's Prayer teaches him how he shall seek and obtain this grace, namely, that through regular, humble confident prayer it shall be given him, and so, through the fulfilling of God's Commandments, he shall be saved."

In 1522 and again in the following year Luther preached series of sermons on these three parts, thus establishing the custom that afterwards became so

widespread, of giving a course, or even several courses, of catechism sermons annually. During the summer of 1522 he again issued the "Short Form" of 1520 as the *Betbüchlein,* adding explanations of the Ave Maria (in opposition to the Mariolatry of the day) and of the Epistle to Titus, together with a number of psalms, used as prayers. It appeared in a number of editions, and the demand for it showed unmistakably the need for some such catechetical manual. Gradually the catechetical material was assuming the form which is familiar to us, and in 1523 another of its divisions was anticipated when the "Five Questions" concerning the Lord's Supper, taken from one of Luther's sermons, were published.

The whole question of the instruction of the young was becoming more and more important in Luther's mind, and he gave it most vigorous expression in the clarion cry of his treatise, *An die Ratsherrn aller Städte deutschen Landes, dass sie christliche Schulen aufrichten und halten sollen,* where this task is declared to be one of the most important confronting both Church and state. In the following February (1525) he charged Justus Jonas and Agricola with the preparation of a "catechismus puerorum." Here, for the first time, we find the word catechism applied to a book rather than to the verbal instruction. This work, however, was not carried out, and so Luther resolved to write a catechism himself. Again his intention was delayed by the appearance, during the fall of the year, of the *Büchlein für Laien und Kinder.* The author is not positively known, but much of the material

it contained had already been furnished by Luther, and, in addition, there were sections on Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as well as one on Confession. The general scheme of the Small Catechism was practically complete.

Another step forward was taken in the publication of the *Deutsche Messe* of 1526, where he not only emphasized the need of catechetical instruction from the pulpit, but where he ordered a regular place for such instruction in the weekday services of the Church, directing that "early on Mondays and Tuesdays a German address should be given on the Ten Commandments, the Creed, Baptism and the Sacrament, sc that these two days may serve to maintain the catechism and encourage its proper understanding." All these suggestions helped to intensify the feeling that some adequate book of instruction must be provided, and various persons set out to supply the need. About thirty such manuals appeared between the years 1522 and 1529, and a few even reached several editions.

As we near the end of this period of preparation, we find the idea of what should be included in a catechism taking more and more definite form. In 1527 Luther and Melanchthon were collaborating in the writing of the instruction for the Saxon Church Visitation, which appeared in the following year. Here was a positive order requiring a knowledge of the five elements of catechetical instruction as a condition for admission to the first communion, and also a direction for their regular explanation at the afternoon services. It was in conformity with this direction that Luther,

during the Ember Weeks of May, September and December, delivered three series of catechetical sermons. This duty had devolved on him through the absence of Bugenhagen in Brunswick and the last series was preached after he had taken part personally in the visitation. These final series became the actual basis for the Catechism.

While we have traced the purely literary genesis of the Catechism we will not fully understand the causes that led to its writing unless we see for ourselves some of the conditions that existed in the Church and which literally drove Luther to this work. To do so we must turn back a few years and view in some detail the actual situation as it gradually unfolded itself.

Even after the work of reformation was well under way it took a long time for the truth to penetrate into the minds of some of the best educated. Far more difficult was the task of enlightening the great mass of common people who had sunk into dismal morasses of ignorance through great sections of the land. It soon became apparent to Luther that the great problem was how to teach the common man. How could this best be done? The help of the secular authorities seemed necessary, not as a religious weapon but to make it possible for the Church to carry on her work. Luther never surrendered his ideal that the Church should be reformed by the Church, but with the breaking down of the whole ecclesiastical order he had to turn to the Elector, to whom he appealed not as a prince but as the most influential mem-

ber of the Church. Accordingly, he wrote to the Elector John on October 31 (a significant date), 1525, requesting that existing conditions be investigated and that suitable arrangements be made for the proper support of the pastors and for the regulation of the affairs of the Church. A month later, on the the 30th of November, he again explains his purposes and clears up some of the misunderstandings concerning the matter of financial support that had arisen in the Elector's mind. In this letter he outlines a practical plan according to which a commission of investigation could proceed in ascertaining the actual conditions and needs of the various portions of the principality.

Various circumstances prevented the immediate execution of his plans, but early in the following year the first attempt at a practical visitation was made under the direction of Spalatin and Michael von der Strasse. It was begun January 8, 1526, in the Amt Borna. Twenty-three clergy were examined, of whom fourteen preached the Gospel, nine did not. Four were married, three lived in concubinage, and five wished to marry. A second visitation was made between Mid-Lent and Easter in the Amt Tenneberg. Here were twelve parishes without a single good pastor. One of them was fair, but eleven were unfit; one lived in concubinage, and one was a drunkard.

For over a year the work was interrupted, but during that year Luther published the *Deutsche Messe,* to which we have already referred, with its statement

of the need of a "simple, plain, good catechism." Even though he was referring only to the elementary instruction of the catechumens rather than to a book, it is evident that the need of a manual was becoming more and more pressing as the conditions of the times were more clearly revealed. The glaring corruption that was apparent at every turn was forcing the issue and would soon bring about the change in the word catechism itself. One great teacher had to provide what a multitude of inefficient ones could not produce, and his book was to become the "catechism" by which the less gifted were to instruct the young.

It is important that we should fully realize the conditions of the times, so that we understand how clearly God's Providence was guiding His servant to the appointed task. We will try to give some of the shadows of the picture as they were reported in official documents, and though some cases were not discovered till after the publication of the Catechism, nevertheless they are only the survival of preceding conditions, and the results would have been just the same, or possibly worse, two, five or ten years earlier. Our materials are drawn from C. A. H. Burkhardt, *Geschichte der sächsichen Kirchen- und Schulvisitationen von* 1524 *bis* 1545, 1879.

The official visitation was resumed in Ernestinian Saxony in July, 1527. The examination of the Kurkreis lasted from 1527 till 1529, and was conducted quite methodically. The earlier experiences had shown the need of improving and revising the previous methods of procedure, and this led to the formula-

tion of the Saxon Visitation Articles already referred to. The first full visitation under these instructions lasted from Oct. 22nd, 1528, to Easter, 1529. The results were certainly not encouraging. We can only give a few indications of what the visitors found, but they will suffice to give us some idea of the spiritual and moral destitution that was crying aloud for help. Here are some of the conditions reported:

In Werche the peasants could neither pray nor recite the Ten Commandments or Creed (Burkhardt, p. 38). In Düben, where they had been served by six different clergymen in a few years, there were 110 families. Often only a scant three persons attended service in this place, but in one year 15 illegitimate children were baptized (ibid. p. 39). In Zinna the peasants refused to learn the Lord's Prayer because "it was too long," and here interruptions of the sermons were not infrequent (ibid. p. 39). At Spütitz and in Muckrehna they had even arranged for the storage of the Pfingstbier in the church (ibid. p. 39).

There were very few schools in the villages, and the people were satisfied if the verger (Küster) taught the children once a week. But if knowledge was limited, superstition was unbounded. In the Amt Arnshaug there was a blind woman who conjured the devil with divine aid. She promised to recover lost goods by her conjurations, and great numbers of people streamed to see her. She even petitioned the Elector to be allowed to carry on a business of conjuration in the interest of the public good, since she hoped by her powers to bring all thieves together into one place

(Amt) (ibid. p. 90-91). Even some of the clergy indulged in such practices. In Elsnig the pastor, an old man, could only stumble through the Lord's Prayer and Creed, but he enjoyed a great reputation for his ability to exorcise the devil and was even taken to Leipzig for that purpose. Such instances help to make vivid the need of the reference to conjuring in the explanation of the Second Commandment.

If we turn to the conditions existing among the clergy themselves, as disclosed by the visitation, we find them equally discouraging. Too many were blind leaders of the blind and needed instruction and guidance themselves. In Meissen and in Voightland, out of 96 clergy, 21 were wholly unfit for the office. Numbers were consorting with their "cooks" or living in concubinage. One had three living wives, and one was legitimately married (ibid. p. 48). The priest in Oberledlau had celebrated no mass nor administered communion in three years (ibid. p. 49).

In Franken, 24 out of 137 clergymen were unfit for their duties, and almost one-third were living in adultery. The clergyman in Hellingen did not mince matters, but declared that he had postponed marriage because he hoped, in the event of the death of his old concubine, "rather to marry a young one" (ibid. p. 60).

In Zwickau, out of 91 clergy, 12 were unfit (ibid. p. 65). The tax collector in Zwickau incidentally stated that the clergyman at Musel, whom the congregation refused to receive, was a respectable man, but that he had been nothing more than a baker's assistant, who

then became a military clerk during the Peasants' Revolt at Zwickau, where he had so comforted the prisoners who were condemned to death, with God's Word, that they had "died so much the more cheerfully" (ibid. p. 76).

Later visitations only confirmed the reports of previous ones. In the second visitation of Thüringen, which had been especially disordered by various sects and by the Peasants' Revolt, almost one-third of the clergy were found unfitted for their office. One who was a candidate for the parish at Seitenrode could not even repeat the Lord's Prayer. He admitted that in six years he had read no book, and for three years was engaged as a farmer and drover, while the rest of his time had been employed in cabinet making (ibid. p. 90). When political changes made possible, at a later day, the visitation of Albertinian Saxony, where Roman influence had continued much longer, conditions were, if possible, still worse. Menius says that out of 200 clergy there were hardly ten who were not fornicators (ibid. p. 250).

Such was the situation. What was still worse, there were numbers of people who did not want too thoroughgoing a reformation because it would affect their selfish interests. There was an intense dislike for the work of the commission and open opposition to the visitation from the degraded clergy who did not wish to be disturbed; from the godless populace that did not want to be rebuked; from many of the nobility who had designs of their own concerning the old church endowments, and from the wild sects who op-

posed any orderly and regulated form of Christianity. These various sources of opposition and disturbance again help us to realize the very vital character of Luther's explanation of the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer. Here as elsewhere he was dealing with realities and not with academic propositions. He had to wrestle with actual life and its deepest problems.

The whole combination of circumstances served to convince him more deeply than ever that the situation must be met by a more fundamental teaching of the Gospel and not by trust in man. He saw very clearly that the Church must be reformed from within, by the power of God's Word, and so with characteristic vigor he turned to the root of the evil, the lack of training in the elements of the faith and the prevailing state of religious ignorance.

How could he meet the terrible conditions of the day and how provide for the religious needs of a neglected populace? The answer came in his Catechisms. The woes of the times had compelled him to write. In the preface to the Small Catechism he says very explicitly that this was the reason for its appearance. "The deplorable condition in which I found religious affairs during a recent visitation of the congregations, has impelled me to publish this Catechism, or statement of Christian doctrine, in this brief and simple form. Alas! what misery I beheld. The common folk, especially those who live in the villages, seem to have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and many of the pastors are ignorant and incompetent teachers. And, nevertheless, they are sup-

posed to be Christians; they have been baptized, and receive the Lord's Supper. Yet they cannot recite the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments, they live as though they were brutes, and now that the Gospel has come to them they grossly abuse their Christian liberty." Doubtless many readers have thought that this was the overdrawn picture of an enthusiastic reformer, but the accounts of the visitation that have been given above show very clearly that this was no exaggeration but a very moderate statement. So the Catechism grew out of the dire necessities of the Church, and it was finally written because a great soul was stirred with compassion; because a flaming heart, filled with zeal for the glory of the Lord of Hosts, suffered itself to be led by the Spirit of God in the understanding and proclamation of the truth.

We saw that Luther had preached the last series of catechism sermons in 1528 while substituting for Bugenhagen, who was then engaged in the regulation of church affairs in Brunswick. At the same time the results of the church visitation and his own experiences convinced him that the time for the appearance of a popular catechism could no longer be delayed. He turned to the task, using as a basis the three series of sermons he had already preached on the subject-matter of the catechism, and the result was not one catechism but two. Just in what order he wrote the two has been the subject of much learned discussion. The probability is that they were actually under way at the same time, though the Large Catechism was begun first. On the 15th of January, 1529, Luther wrote to

Martin Görlitz that he was engaged in the preparation of a catechism for the "rude heathen" ("Modo in parando catechismo pro rudibus paganis versor." Enders, 7 p. 43). Five days later Rörer, who was reading proof in the printing establishment of Nik. Schirlentz in Wittenberg, wrote that he hoped that the Catechism "pro rudibus et simplicibus" would make its appearance very shortly. These references are to the Large Catechism. It is more than likely that Luther realized that what he was writing, and which later was called the Large Catechism, would not answer for the needs of children and uneducated persons and so, at the same time, he wrote the Small Catechism. The first three parts, at least, must have appeared as wall charts, during the first weeks of 1529, for they are mentioned in the Church Order given by the visitors to the town Schönewalde, near Wittenberg (Sehling I, 1 p. 667). This Church Order appeared between the 7th and 9th of January, 1529. On the 12th of January Rörer sent these *tabulae* to Spalatin in Altenburg, and in a letter addressed to Roth on January 20th he states that the *tabulae,* complectentes brevissime simul et crasse catechismum Lutheri pro pueris et familia, were hanging on the walls of his room, and he sends along a specimen as a novelty. On the 12th of the following month he even tells that the wall charts which had been printed to sell for a penny a piece, were no longer to be had, as the entire supply had been exhausted. The existence of these *tabulae* was long questioned, and their exact character debated till finally a copy of the table of Morning and Evening

Prayer in the Low German version was discovered, by Dr. J. Förstemann, pasted in an old bookbinding. It was published and discussed by Prof. Rietschel in the Th. St. Kr., in 1898. These first charts, however, only contained the first three parts of the Catechism. Those containing Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar and the German Litany were not issued till about March 16th.

The Large Catechism appeared first in book form in April, 1529. Then, a month later, the Small Catechism. The original edition of May 16th, 1529, is no longer extant, though there are Marburg and Erfurt reprints. The second (?) edition is also no longer accessible, but the third Wittenberg edition of June 13th, 1529, has been preserved. The edition of 1531 is perhaps the most important, as it is the last that was revised by Luther himself. Since it represents the final form of the Catechism as issued under Luther's own direction, it has been made the basis of the new English translation that is presented in this volume.

A full account of the various editions will be found in the introductions by Albrecht to the Catechisms in the Weimar Edition, 30, I, 1910; Albrecht, Luthers Katechismen, 1915; Reu, Catechetics, 2nd Ed. 1927; Reu, Luther's Small Catechism, 1929. For extensive bibliographies the reader is referred to these works.

Chapter Two

THE VICTORIOUS MARCH OF THE CATECHISM THROUGH THE WORLD

THAT the Catechism was a book with a mission was quickly demonstrated. Edition followed edition in rapid succession, and it was in such demand that when Mathesius was preaching his sermons on the life of Luther (1562-63) he could thank God for the fact that the Catechism had been printed in more than one hundred thousand copies, not only in Latin and German but in many other tongues, and that it was being circulated in the lands beyond Germany. Little did he dream that what seemed to him such a wonderful achievement would be completely overshadowed by the situation at the end of four centuries when this little book, in place of being consigned to the peaceful slumber of library shelves, is still maintaining its place in Church and school and home throughout the whole world, and when it is available in more languages than any other book except the Bible.

However, what happened in the Sixteenth Century was extraordinary enough. From the date of its publication to the end of the century is approximately two generations. One who had been instructed in the Catechism in the year of its first appearance might still be

living, an old man teaching it to his grandchildren, at the end of the century. Yet in that short time the spread of the Catechism had been most remarkable. It was made available for the entire learned world almost immediately, as two Latin translations appeared in 1529 and two others followed within the next thirty-one years. In less than half a century four Greek versions were published and one in Hebrew. The last named appeared in the polyglot edition (German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew) of Clajus, 1572.

While Latin was the spoken language of the schools and the learned world, and so we could justly class it as a living tongue, yet such translations could never have the importance of those that were made into the generally spoken languages of the world. Within the period we are considering the Catechism was made accessible to the common people in about twenty-five languages, in round figures. In some of them, as the old Prussian, Wendish, North Friesic, Slovenian and Lithuanian, it is actually the oldest remaining literary monument of the language.

Almost simultaneously with the appearance of the High German issues came two Plattdeutsch editions, first in chart and then in book form, which were followed by two other Low German issues in 1531 and 1534. Within fifty years the Catechism was published in Friesic, Wendish, some Slavonic dialects, Old Prussian, Polish, Lithuanian, Serbian, Bohemian, Hungarian, Lettish and Esthonian, while its use had spread through great parts of what we have known till recently as the Empire of Austria-Hungary.

In Scandinavia it followed hard on the Reformation of the Church in those countries. Four Danish translations appeared between 1532 and 1538. From Denmark it traveled into Norway after 1538 and reached Iceland, in the language of the people, in 1562. Sweden first had some other catechisms, but Luther's appeared in 1544, and from thence passed into Finland and the Finnish language, finally reaching even to the Laplanders.

It appeared in Dutch around 1558, while it was rendered into French almost immediately. Even an Italian translation, published in Tübingen, was issued in 1562. So from little Saxony it spread not only into the rest of the German-speaking lands but into the great majority of the surrounding countries. Of one of them that we have passed by we will have more to say in a moment.

The widening circles of influence have not ceased their course but have lasted to our own day and have finally compassed the earth. For the use of the Catechism is practically as widespread as the extent of the Lutheran faith, and even a little wider, since it is used not only in the missions of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, but even in most of those conducted by the Moravians.

We have not quite finished, however, with the sixteenth Century. A special interest attaches to the English translation of the Catechism and its peculiar history. Here there seemed at first to be a great opportunity, then complete failure, and finally a new beginning that ultimately was crowned with such success

that the most extensive spread into new fields of the Catechism in modern times has been in this language.

When we turn back to the earliest stages of the Reformation in England, while it was still primarily a religious movement, it was beyond question predominantly Lutheran. Only after the political factors had become more apparent did it assume a more Calvinistic tone. Apart from the other outward factors that contributed towards the theological change that was to be expected, since there is a natural affinity between politics and the genius of Calvinism that predisposes the one toward the other. The first stage of the Reformation in England was, however, very different from its later developments.

Largely through the influence of Erasmus, a deep interest had been awakened in the English universities not only for humanism but also for the reform movement led by Luther that was at first so frequently confused with it. Quantities of his books were imported from the Continent, and a Latin translation of Luther's Catechism is noted in the Index of prohibited books for 1529. It would carry us too far afield to consider the various evidences of Lutheran influence, particularly of the "Betbüchlein," that is shown in different publications of that period. We are concerned only with the introduction of the Catechism proper into England. To understand how it could pass unrecognized and be hidden under a misleading name we must turn back to Germany to consider a special form of Luther's Catechism that was in quite extensive

use after 1533 and which exercised a wide influence in its day.

A series of *Kinderpredigten,* written by Andreas Osiander and Dominicus Sleupner, was published in connection with the great Brandenburg-Nürnberg Kirchenordnung of 1533. They consisted of a number of sermons of considerable pedagogical merit, intended for the instruction of the young, and were based on the Small Catechism; each sermon, with one exception, being concluded with the actual words of Luther's explanation. Only the part on Confession and the introduction and conclusion of the Lord's Prayer were lacking. In the place of the former a sermon on the power of the Keys was inserted, which probably owed its place to the controversy that had arisen between Osiander and the secular authorities on the subject of confession. These *Kinderpredigten* were translated into Latin by Justus Jonas in 1539, and both in German and Latin, to say nothing of various other languages into which they were translated, their use was quite widespread and their influence considerable.

Just about the time these *Kinderpredigten* were being written, Thomas Cranmer was a temporary resident of Nürnberg. He had been sent to Germany to present the divorce of Henry VIII in as favorable a light as possible to the Emperor and the Protestant princes. The actual results were more momentous for Cranmer than for Henry's schemes, because the future archbishop came into close contact with various Lutheran theologians, married a niece of Osiander, and established contacts that were kept alive in later years

through a correspondence extensive enough to average a monthly exchange of letters.

Before the end of the year 1532 his stay was interrupted through his appointment to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. It was the highest ecclesiastical honor of his country, but also created a decidedly embarrassing situation for its recipient. He sent his wife to England secretly, but English sentiment was scandalized at the idea of a married archbishop, and so the poor lady had to be returned for some time to Germany.

With the death of Henry and the accession of Edward VI the way was finally opened for a real reformation of the English Church. When the opportunity came, one of Cranmer's first official acts was to issue an English translation of Jonas' Latin rendering of the *Kinderpredigten*. Whether it is entirely his own work or was merely supervised and edited by him is not quite clear, but it was published by his authority and bears on the title page the statement that it was "set forthe by the mooste reverende father in God Thomas archbishop of Canterbury," while at the head of the preface it is stated that it is "oversene and corrected by the moost reverende father in God the archebyshoppe of Canterburie." So it was not strange that the whole book came to be known as "Cranmer's Catechism," and the fact that the text of Luther's Small Catechism was included at the end of the sermons passed unnoticed. The first English translation of the Catechism, as a result, passed current under Cranmer's name.

Soon the situation was changed. The increasing inclination of Cranmer towards Calvinism and the growth of Genevan influence in English theology combined to nullify the Lutheran trend of the Church of England. For several centuries the Small Catechism lost its influence in the English language and seemed destined to have no future among English speaking peoples. Yet the Providence of God decreed otherwise, for it actually has made it greatest gains during the past century and a half among those of that language. The second beginning had none of the prestige of an archbishop to give it impetus. It came in a very inconspicuous way from the needs of a German congregation among whose children there were some who were more familiar with the language of the land than with that of their forefathers. In 1749, two hundred and one years after Cranmer's translation, the Rev. Peter Brunholtz of Philadelphia, probably assisted by Mr. Peter Koch, a Swedish Lutheran of the same city, prepared a new English translation to meet the needs of those who no longer understood German. This unpretentious beginning marks the real entrance of the Catechism into the life of the English-speaking Church. It was followed by the revisions of Provost Wrangel, 1761, and of Dr. J. C. Kunze, 1785. Unfortunately all three editions have been lost.

The first American translation extant was issued in 1795 by Dr. Kunze assisted by the Rev. Geo. Strebeck. Here we find the beginnings of that text which later came to be known as the Schaeffer text. About one-half of the 1795 translation has remained to this day.

An anonymous translation, based on that of Strebeck, was issued in Philadelphia in 1802.

All these were intended merely to provide for the needs of minorities in various congregations, but that need was increasing as the tide began setting more and more strongly towards the English language. In 1804 the first purely English-speaking congregation in Philadelphia was organized, and its pastor, Dr. Ph. F. Mayer, officiated only at English services. Together with Dr. Quitman he had revised the Strebeck translation in 1804, and in 1806 and 1816 he issued further revisions of his own. These successive revisions reached a point at which they already contained about nine-tenths of the later Schaeffer text.

Other translations began to appear. One by Paul Henkel, 1811, exercised no influence on later translations, while those of the General Synod, 1825, of David Henkel, 1827, of Dr. Morris, 1844, and the one published by Henry Ludwig, 1846, are all based on Dr. Mayer's text, some reproducing it almost exactly.

Finally Dr. C. F. Schaeffer made a careful revision of the Mayer text in the interests of greater accuracy. Before publication it was further revised by the Revs. C. F. Welden, A. T. Geissenhainer, and B. M. Schmucker, and was finally issued in 1854. This translation, which for convenience we call the Schaeffer text, has had very extensive use and found its way into the Jacobs' edition of the Book of Concord and the Common Service Book.

Independent translations were not lacking, such

as the second translation of Dr. Morris, 1854, and those of H. Wentzel, 1872, Dr. Philip Schaff, 1876, the Ohio and Missouri Synods, 1884. They all suffered from one fault, a crass literalism that might reproduce the sense correctly enough but that often became offensive to an English ear. At the end of the nineteenth century a number of synods appointed representatives who were commissioned to attempt a new translation. Their labors lasted from 1890 till 1899. While possessed of many excellencies, a stiff and awkward English style again prevented its general use.

Finally, the desire to secure a uniform text in place of the various translations now in use, prompted the Norwegian Lutheran Church to issue an invitation to the other Lutheran bodies of America to cooperate in the undertaking. After a preliminary meeting held in Chicago, February 16, 1926, the work was begun with the following bodies cooperating: The Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Augustana Synod, the Danish United Church, the Synod of Iowa, the Lutheran Free Church and the United Lutheran Church. Each body was represented by two persons, and the full committee as well as a subcommittee of four members held a number of meetings which resulted in the publication of a provisional edition in 1927. This was again revised, with due regard to the many criticisms received, at two meetings held in 1928, and has resulted in the present translation. It is humbly submitted to the Church in the hope that, if it has not attained finality, it may at least mark another forward step in the triumphant march of Lu-

ther's Small Catechism through that portion of the world that speaks the English tongue.

For a more complete treatment of various phases see H. E. Jacobs, The Lutheran Movement in England, 1894; J. C. Mattes, Luther's Small Catechism in the English Translation of Thomas Cranmer; M. Reu, Kirchliche Zeitschrift, 1927, and two articles on the English Translations of the Small Catechism by Dr. B. M. Schmucker in the Lutheran Church Review, April and July, 1886.

Chapter Three

THE USE MADE OF THE CATECHISM IN THE PAST

AT first the Catechism was used with considerable freedom. Besides the great number of editions of the original text, it was widely used in the modified form of the Nürnberg *Kinderpredigten.* In a number of provinces they were officially introduced, and before the end of the sixteenth century they had been translated into Low German, Latin, English, Dutch, Polish and Icelandic. In addition, about fifty explanations of the Catechism appeared before the end of the century, some of them, like the *Kinderpredigten,* even making slight alterations in the text, without, however, effecting any improvement.

Soon these well meant attempts at revision ceased, not merely because they failed in their purpose but because a book that had become confessional had an official and public standing that forbade any alteration of the text itself. How it came to receive such standing is in itself a remarkable testimony to its surpassing merit. By general acclamation, so to speak, it was exalted to the place of a Confession. Beginning with the Kirchenordnung of Pfalz-Zweibrücken, in 1557, it was inserted in eight Church Orders before

1580 and, in the form of the *Kinderpredigten* found its way into five others. It was inserted in five *Corpora Doctrinae* and was recognized as a confessional book in Lower Saxony, Nürnberg, Brandenburg-Ansbach and Hohenlohe. So when it was finally included in the Book of Concord in 1580 its standing was not changed; it was only the ratification of what had already become a fact. Even among the confessions it is unique. We can certainly claim for it the position of a layman's confession that speaks in terms that the layman and even the child can understand. It is the only confession of any faith, outside the Ecumenical Creeds, that holds such a position, and it is the only creed that is at the same time a book of devotion and the most widespread manual of religious instruction in the world. No other catechism, not even of the Roman communion, has ever attained to such general use.

While the text has thus become inviolate, its use for purposes of religious instruction has varied greatly during the centuries. How seriously the fathers regarded their task of instruction and how they used the Catechism for that purpose, can be seen in the provisions of the Church Order of 1580 for Electoral Saxony. After prohibiting the use of any other catechism besides Luther's it directs that the pastors in the villages shall recite the entire Catechism to their congregations every Sunday, before the Gospel, so that they become familiar with its contents. The pastors are further required to instruct the young in the Catechism, adhering strictly to the subject matter of the

Catechism and examining the hearers to make sure that they have understood the instruction. Where secular employment made such instruction impossible on week days it was ordered held in the afternoon on Sundays and at festivals. When parishes were too large or the chapels too far removed for the pastor to undertake the entire work, the verger was to instruct children in the text of the Catechism, but only after he had been examined and approved by the consistory. A special examination of those who came for the first time to the Holy Communion was to be conducted by the pastor. Furthermore, yearly examinations were provided for, to be held at the afternoon services beginning with Estomihi (Quinquagesima) and continuing during the Sundays in Lent. Here again the pastors are warned to stick to the text of the questions and answers and to do their work in a sympathetic manner. There was even provision for the separate examination of families and individuals that was to be conducted so that they would not be embarrassed by the number of hearers, while it is suggested that the older people can be interrogated in private confession. The purpose of all these provisions was not for show but to insure a thorough knowledge of the essentials of the faith, as contained in the Catechism, on the part of all the people. What dire need there was we have seen vividly pictured in the reports given above of the Saxon Visitation. Here we also find the beginnings of catechetical instruction in the narrower sense with which we are most familiar.

There is evidence that Luther's original intention

of having the house-father teach the Catechism to the family was not forgotten. The catechism of Rosinus even gives elaborate directions for the way in which it shall be done. The Church not only urged such instruction on the people but, as we have seen, by constant repetition of the text of the Catechism at public services, by the regularly recurring catechism sermons, by the special preparation for the first Communion and by the questions asked in connection with private confession used every means to make sure that the people were instructed in the elements of the faith. In addition the *Kinderlehre* furnished special opportunities for special catechetical instruction. Here, after a longer or shorter liturgical opening service, came questions and answers, some perhaps learned in school during the week, and an explanation of the portion of the Catechism appointed for the day. In some places children that answered well were rewarded, while in Electoral Saxony parents and masters who did not send their children to instruction were fined for their neglect. In some localities the examinations were conducted not only on the Sundays but on every day during Lent.

In the schools there was plenty of drilling not only in German, but the Latin and Greek translations were used as text books of instruction in those languages, while finally even a Hebrew version was used for the same purpose, we fear with doubtful results as far as the spiritual development of the scholar was concerned. A course in Hebrew, Greek and Latin would hardly inspire the scholastic victim with a special love

for the Catechism. The methods we have outlined were doubtless very mechanical at times. To us they seem very exaggerated, but they originated in the bitter needs of the desperate ignorance of the masses and they certainly produced a race that was able to endure successfully the terrible privations and hardships of the Thirty Years' War.

As we move on into the time of Orthodoxy and Pietism, marked changes appear in the methods of instruction. On the one hand there was a growing tendency towards overloading the Catechism with additional explanations, all leading further and further away from the practical religious statement of truth to theological dissertations until almost the entire dogmatic system was imported into the instruction, and the vital cargo of truth was sunk deeper and deeper beneath the scholastic ballast. The same thing was true of the catechetical sermons, and to add to the wreck a great part of the teaching degenerated into mere verbal repetition in which the children were drilled by the verger. Only we must not lay the blame on orthodoxy. When men like Arndt, Gerhard and Dannhauer alike raised their voices in pleading for more practical methods, it is evident that the real theologians were not the ones responsible for such conditions. Nor were such conditions universal, for there was much excellent catechetical work done between 1580 and 1677.

Pietism set out to correct some of these conditions, but soon helped to develop others as bad. Spener and Francke contributed nothing especially new in methods,

but the force of position and personality gained for them a hearing. They wanted to implant the truths in the heart of the individual child, to make all real. No one can do otherwise but sympathize with such an effort. Gerhard and Dannhauer desired it as much as did they, but in attempting a "practical application" they, or their followers, developed such a subjectivism that the result was often an artificial construction of the inner life of the children that was just as mechanical and dangerous as the parrot-learning on the other side.

An undue regard for intellectual truth as the product of pure reason on the one hand and an exaggeration of the feelings on the other, both of them an exaltation of the individual, naturally led to the self-sufficiency of the age of rationalism. The Catechism came to be more and more disregarded in direct proportion as its truths were unpalatable to the smug complacency of the illumination. It may be granted that some pedagogical improvements, such as the introduction of the Socratic method, took place in this period, but even this only ran to seed as it was united to the rationalistic system.

It remained for the religious revival of the nineteenth century, with its renewed grasp of revealed truth, to restore the Catechism to its proper place as the ideal method of imparting that truth. It did not attempt to educe truth from the consciousness of the child but recognized the fact that the Word of Life is not an inner light, but an external fact, which must be brought through its God-appointed means to

each soul. The increasing regard for the Catechism came from the renewed appreciation of divine revelation, just as before the lack of appreciation of that revelation had led to its disparagement. It has always been the content of the Catechism, not its form, that has awakened opposition or gained approval.

One writer of that period has well described the convictions of those who were returning to the vital faith of reformation days. In the introduction to the second edition of his *Evangelische Katechetik,* 1846, Palmer remarks that "It is indeed true that anyone with Luther's Catechism in his hand can still teach anything he pleases, nevertheless he knows that the Church has intrusted to him the Catechism and the office of a catechist only for the purpose of teaching according to the mind of the Church in whose service he is engaged, and so his conscience must judge concerning what he does. In any case, as the Catechism belongs in the hands of the people, the congregation will then have a sure guide by which it can determine whether he is teaching evangelical truth or not. Should anyone who recognizes the fact that the Catechism must needs be a confessional book, all the more desire the production of new catechisms because he deems the old ones inadequate, he is straightway confronted with the fact that we are in no position to produce anything even half suitable. We need only to place the catechetical work of recent times besides that of Luther, and any man who is not totally blind can see for himself the colorless, insipid character of the former, now so skimped and then so longwinded, as it

stands in striking contrast to the living power, the energy, and the popular character of the latter. If we do not have the ability to construct a new symbol, it is still more evident that we are unable to produce a new catechism that shall take the place of Luther's. We can confess that inability all the more boldly because there is no need of testing our powers in this direction. We do not require a new catechism, for Luther is still performing his duty perfectly and, if God wills, is not likely to become unserviceable for a long time."

Since the middle of the last century this fact has become more and more generally recognized, and there is general agreement in all Lutheran churches that Luther's Catechism should be the basis of religious instruction. The most debated question in church circles has only to do with the supplementary material to be used in connection with it. True, there have been bitter controversies about its use in the public schools of some Lutheran lands, particularly in some parts of Germany, but it requires no demonstration to show that such opposition does, as a rule, not come from churchmen, but arises out of the evil situation that has come to pass in states where the majority are indeed nominal members of the Church, but where there is a free-thinking element opposed to much of revealed truth, and where the Catechism is too often being taught by those who repudiate its teachings but who are required by law to use it. This is an unnatural situation that is a very serious reflection on the church that will submit to it. It is both an anachronism, as it

perpetuates conditions that no longer exist, and an unwholesome survival of the old mechanical ideas of teaching. But after that has been said the more serious fact still remains that the real opposition is not to the Catechism because it is a poor text book, since its most active opponents must recognize it as an intensely living bit of literature and just for that reason hate it, but because it so vividly presents that faith that is offensive to the natural man. To the liberal theologian, the vulgar freethinker, the conceited skeptic and the self-satisfied philistine alike it is an offensive book; to hungry souls and to humble believers it is a very precious gift of God.

Chapter Four

THE EXCELLENCIES OF THE CATECHISM AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE PRESENT

A Confession

IN one way the Catechism holds an absolutely unique position in the world. It is the only confession, outside the Ecumenical Creeds, that has world-wide use as a catechism and that is regularly committed to memory by those who confess it, and it is the only catechism of such extensive use that is also a creed of the Church that uses it as a practical manual of instruction. Think of a great communion whose members almost without exception know a confession by heart and who are not only familiar with the central facts as they are told in the Ten Commandments, the Creed, etc., but who understand their meaning. *Here the teaching of the Church is written in the hearts of the people.* The significance of such a fact cannot be overestimated. It is one of the greatest assurances of the perpetuation of the faith of the Church. Let the people be permeated with faith in the great central truths and even unbelieving theologians will not be able to upset their convictions. More than once the

faith of the common people has conquered the false theologies of the schools. Opponents of true doctrine have often realized this fact in the past. When the Cryptocalvinists, for example, tried to gain control of Electoral Saxony, one of their first moves was an attempt, in 1571, to supplant Luther's Catechism by means of the "Wittenberg Catechism," and when Frederick III was engaged in making Reformed believers out of his Lutheran subjects in the Palatinate, one of the most potent means of effecting his desires was the substitution of the Heidelberg Catechism for Luther's.

A Life Book

The Catechism is one of the greatest popular bulwarks of the faith, but it could not be so if it were only, like so many catechisms, a popular system of theology. That is exactly what it is not. It is a life book and the apparent lack of system, for which it has sometimes been criticised, is its greatest strength. If we are ever justified in distinguishing between theological truths and religious truths we would be justified in doing so here, for while Luther's theological interests are always religious they are never more intensely so than in the Catechism. So devotional is its whole spirit that it can be prayed. There is not a hint of polemics even though it was written in the midst of the most strenuous theological battles. It does not concern itself with a statement of the more abstract ques-

tions of theology like the decrees of Chalcedon, though those truths in their practical religious significance are here. It does not consider the metaphysical implications of theology, like the canons of Dort. It is not a theological compromise, like the 39 Articles, nor is it a series of laws, like the decrees of Trent or the Vatican. It is a devotional confession of the great central truths of the faith as the soul must know them to be saved. No, it is not an arid system but pulsates with the conviction of a living faith. Every part has a direct and explicit connection with the needs of the sin-burdened soul, and in each part it grasps what is central in that phase of the faith. Each part views the whole of Christianity under a certain aspect. All revolves about Jesus Christ, who "is my Lord" and always preserves in perfect balance the great facts without which He would not be *the* Savior, and of the faith without which He would not be *my* Savior. The objective and subjective are not divorced but preserved in the inseparable unity of true faith.

A Book of Fundamentals

So it becomes a book of the fundamentals of the faith in which what is really central is kept central. All centers around Jesus Christ and our need of His atonement. Sometimes men have been surprised that justification by faith is not mentioned in the Catechism. The name is missing, but the fact pervades the whole.

Far better than most of the dogmatic elaborations is the simple explanation of this doctrine in what is said about the forgiveness of sins. To Luther the forgiveness of sins was not a step towards justification but justification itself. Here as elsewhere he does not dissect a doctrine nor consider it in some fragmentary way but in its entirety. That applies even to the application of forgiveness to the individual. Later generations sometimes so distorted this doctrine, so overemphasized the individual, that they lost all idea of the Communion of Saints and of the importance of the Church. But here in the midst of the beautiful confession which is all in the first person singular, where the child is taught to say "I believe," and confesses that the Holy Ghost "forgives abundantly all my sins," the other side comes just as fully to its right, for he is taught that this takes place in the Christian Church, and that He "sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." The individual is not lost in an institution, but neither is the Church lost sight of behind the individual. He is a part of the whole and the whole includes all its parts.

Throughout there breathes a deep evangelical spirit. The law has its place, but no legalism. The spirit of the fear and love of God that strives to realize God's revelation of His eternal will takes the place of a code of legal enactments. The Creed is there, not as a formal statement of fact or doctrine to which we must give a mere assent, but as a living confession of the one true saving faith, which must be

our very own to be effective. The Lord's Prayer is no longer a magic formula to be told off on beads but the most perfect expression of every need of the soul. Confession is no longer the rack for the torturing of souls but the most beautiful assurance of personal forgiveness. The Sacraments are neither a mechanical *opus operatum,* nor empty signs, but a real grace that requires the appropriation of what it offers through a real faith. But in all this there is no polemic against the errors of others; only the clear and positive statement of the simple truth.

Even in those portions that are so often overlooked there is the same spirit. In the Table of Duties, for example, we have the beginnings of an evangelical ethics that has no place for works of supererogation but sees how the spirit of the Gospel must penetrate to all life and how it is to be realized by every "holy estate." In the morning and evening prayers with their directions for the folding of the hands, kneeling, signing with the cross, there is a fine appreciation of the beauty of symbolic worship. It is just another little evidence of the conservative character of all Luther did. He knew the value of little things and did not despise the great heritage of the past.

A Teachable Book

The whole Catechism, in fact, is not a revolutionary production but the final perfection of what had been slowly gathered by preceding ages, with the dross removed from the ore and the whole purified

in the furnace of his own God-given experience into pure gold. Those elements which have been most valued by the Church through the centuries here found their most perfect presentation. Silly objections and pedagogical fads have tried to consign it to oblivion, but instead it has only come to more general use and attained to greater appreciation. Its influence on the Church's life has widened instead of narrowing. Four centuries of use have not worn it threadbare but have proved its perennial freshness, for it not only deals with essential and eternal truths, but it does so with the greatest simplicity. Both in language and in form it possess that childlike simplicity that is required by the most perfect faith. Perhaps a very modern writer has stated the case as well as anyone: "Luther's genius rests on a certain faculty that he possessed. Because he never outgrew the feeling of wonder; because all his life he kept the eyes of a child, that could perceive what was wonderful in the commonplace; because what was really great always remained great for him; because he always returned to the same questions, as though by an inner compulsion, and, with his whole personality absorbed in the task, had to wrestle with them till he had thought them through, he became creative. So he found the simple solutions which remained hidden to the wise and prudent of his day because they could not venture to grasp the totality or advance beyond their scholastic ideas" (Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsaetze,* I, 387). Nowhere did the "child's eyes" find the simple solutions more beautifully than in the Catechism. Luther himself who was so indif-

ferent to the fate of his writings that he once said he could, like Saturn, devour all his mental children, expressly excepted the Catechism and the *De Servo Arbitrio*. That seems on the face of it a strange combination; a child-like Catechism with a treatise on a metaphysical subject, but in the one case as in the other the motive was a religious one. He wanted to express his deepest religious convictions, once for the common man, then against a Pelagian philosophy.

The great treatise on the Servitude of the Will is only read and grasped by scholars, and even they frequently misunderstand its purpose; the Catechism is the common property of old and young. The child grasps it and the old man has not exhausted its meaning. Even the great author himself was not ashamed to confess himself a life-long student of these simple truths of which he has given such a classic explanation. "But this I say for myself, I am also a doctor and a preacher, yea, as learned and experienced as all who have such presumption and security; yet I do as a child who is being taught the catechism. Every morning and whenever I have time I read and say word for word, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Psalms, etc. And I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain, and that too gladly, a child and pupil of the catechism" (The New Preface to the Large Catechism).

Only a few days before his end, when he was writing to his wife to cheer her in her depression, he has this little book in mind and as he urges her to read

it and recalls her own statement it may be that unconsciously he stated the reason why it was so precious to him and also why it has held so firmly the hearts of the succeeding generations: "Dear Kaethe," he writes, "read St. John and the Small Catechism of which you once said that everything in it was written about you." Everything in it is written about me—therein lies the secret of its power.

Luther was not alone in treasuring this little book so highly, but actually the most modest in his estimate, for there is a great chorus of praise that has been rendered in its honor, in which even the most eminent theologians have sung their part. We might fill page after page with their statements but we will pass them by and turn back once more to the words of the simple-hearted, devout preacher of Joachimsthal, for the gratitude he there expressed we we can repeat just as honestly almost four centuries later: "If Doctor Luther in the course of his life had accomplished no other good than the introduction of his two Catechisms into the homes, schools and pulpits, and the restoration of prayer before and after meals, and when we lie down to sleep and when we rise again, the whole world could never sufficiently thank him or repay him."

JOHN C. MATTES
M. REU

Dr. Martin
Luther's
Small
Catechism

Vorred D. Mart. Luth.

Artinus Luther / Allen trewen frōmen Pfarrherrn vñ Predigern. Gnad/barmhertzigkeit vnd Friede in Jhesu Christo vnserm HERRN.

PREFACE

MARTIN LUTHER TO ALL FAITHFUL AND GODLY PASTORS AND PREACHERS: GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE, IN JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD!

THE deplorable condition in which I found religious affairs during a recent visitation of the congregations, has impelled me to publish this Catechism, or statement of the Christian doctrine, in this brief and simple form. Alas! what misery I beheld! The common folk, especially those who live in the villages, seem to have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and many of the pastors are ignorant and incompetent teachers. And, nevertheless, they are all supposed to be Christians; they have been baptized and receive the Lord's Supper. Yet they cannot recite the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live as if they were mere brutes, and now that the Gospel has come to them, they grossly abuse their Christian liberty.

Ye bishops! what answer will you give to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people, and paid no attention to the duties of your office? I invoke no evil on your heads. But you withhold the cup in the Lord's Supper, insist on the observance of human laws, and yet, at the same time, do not take the least interest in teaching the people the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any other part of the Word of God. Woe unto you!

Wherefore I beseech you in the Name of God, my beloved brethren, who are pastors or preachers, to

engage heartily in the discharge of the duties of your office, to take pity on the people who are entrusted to your care, and to assist us in impressing the teachings of the Catechism upon them, and especially upon the young. And if any of you do not possess the necessary qualifications, I beseech you to take at least the following forms, and read them to the people, word for word, on this wise:—

In the first place: let the preacher take the utmost care to avoid all changes or variations in the text and wording of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sacraments, etc. Let him, on the contrary, take one form, adhere to it, and repeat it anew, year after year. For young and inexperienced people cannot be successfully instructed, unless we adhere to the same text and form. They easily become confused, when the teacher at one time employs a certain form and, at another, perhaps with a view of making improvements, adopts a different form. The result of such a course will be, that all the time and labor which we have expended will be lost.

This point was well understood by our venerable fathers, who were accustomed to use the same words in teaching the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. We, too, should follow this plan when we reach these things, particularly in the case of the young and unlearned, not changing a single syllable, nor introducing any variations when, year after year, we recur to these forms and recite them anew before our hearers.

Choose, therefore, the form which best pleases

you, and adhere to it continually. When you preach in the presence of intelligent and learned men, you are at liberty to exhibit your knowledge and skill, and may present and discuss these subjects in all the varied modes which are at your command. But when you are teaching the young, retain the same form and manner without change; teach them, first of all, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, etc., always presenting the same words of the text, so that those who learn can repeat them after you, and retain them in the memory.

But if any refuse to receive your instructions, tell them plainly that they deny Christ and are not Christians; such persons shall not be admitted to the Lord's Table, nor be accepted as sponsors, nor enjoy any of our Christian privileges, but are to be sent back to the pope and his agents, and, indeed, to Satan himself. Their parents and employers should, besides, refuse to furnish them with food and drink, and notify them that the government is disposed to banish from the country all persons of such a rude and intractable character.

For although we cannot, and should not, compel any one to believe, we ought, nevertheless, to instruct the masses with all diligence, so that they may know how to distinguish between right and wrong according to the standards of those with whom they live, or among whom they desire to earn their living. For whosoever desires to reside in a city, and enjoy the rights and privileges which its laws confer, is also bound to know and obey those laws, whether he be

a believer (God grant it!), or at heart and in secret a scoundrel or a knave.

In the second place: after those whom you are instructing have become familiar with the text, then teach them its meaning. For that purpose, again take the forms here given, or choose any other brief and fixed form, but adhere strictly to that form without altering a single syllable, as before stated concerning the text; besides, allow yourself ample time for these explanations. For it is not necessary that you should take up all the parts at once, but present them separately, in regular succession. When the people have, for instance, at length correctly understood the First Commandment, you may proceed to the Second, and so continue. Otherwise, the people being overburdened, will fail to understand and will not well remember any part of their instruction.

In the third place: when you have thus taught them this short catechism thoroughly, take up the large catechism, and by means of it furnish the people with fuller and more comprehensive explanations. Explain here at large every Commandment, every Petition, and, indeed, every part, showing the duties which they severally impose, and both the advantages which follow the performance of those duties, and also the dangers and losses which result from the neglect of them, as you will find an abundance of such material in many books written for that purpose. Enlarge in an especial manner on such Commandments or other parts as seem to be most neglected by your people. It will, for example, be necessary that you should stress

with the utmost earnestness the Seventh Commandment, which treats of stealing, when your are teaching workmen, dealers, and even farmers and servants, inasmuch as many of these are guilty of various dishonest and thievish practices. So too, it will be your duty to explain and apply the Fourth Commandment with great diligence, when you are teaching children and uneducated adults, and to urge them to be orderly, faithful, obedient, and peaceable. Always adduce numerous instances mentioned in the Scriptures, which show that God punished such as were guilty in these things, and blessed the obedient.

Here, too, let it be your great aim to urge magistrates and parents to rule wisely, and to educate the children, showing them at the same time, that such duties are imposed on them, and how grievously they sin if they neglect them. For in such a case they overthrow and lay waste alike the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, acting as the worst enemies both of God and man. And show them very plainly the shocking evils of which they are the authors, when they refuse their aid in training up children to be pastors, preachers, public officials, etc., and set forth that on account of such sins God will inflict an awful punishment upon them. It is, indeed, necessary to preach on these things; for parents and magistrates are guilty of sins in this respect, which are so great that there are no terms in which they can be described. And truly, Satan has a cruel design in fostering these evils.

Finally: inasmuch as the people are now relieved

from the tyranny of the pope, they refuse to come to the Lord's Table, and treat it with contempt. On this point, also, urgent exhortation is necessary, but with the understanding, that we are to compel no one to believe, or to receive the Lord's Supper; that we are not to establish any laws on this point, or appoint the time and place; but that we should so preach that the people, without any law, desire the Lord's Supper, and, as it were, compel us who are pastors, to administer it to them. Now, this object may be attained if we address them in the following manner: It is to be feared that he who does not desire to receive the Lord's Supper at least three or four times during the year, despises the Sacrament, and is no Christian. So, too, he is no Christian who neither believes nor hears the Gospel; for Christ did not say: "Neglect this or despise this," but "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it," etc. He commands that this should be done, and by no means neglected and despised. He says: "This do."

Now, he who does not highly value the Sacrament, shows thereby that he has no sin, no flesh, no devil, no world, no death, no hell; that is to say, he does not believe that such evils exist, although he may be deeply immersed in them, and completely belong to the devil. On the other hand, he needs no grace, no life, no Paradise, no heaven, no Christ, no God, no good thing. For if he believed that he was involved in such evils, and that he was in need of such blessings, he could not refrain from receiving the Sacrament, wherein aid is afforded against such evils, and, again, such blessings are bestowed. It will not be

necessary to compel him by the force of any law to approach the Lord's Table; he will hasten to it of his own accord, will feel constrained to come, and indeed urge you to administer the Sacrament to him.

Hence, you are by no means to adopt any compulsory law in this case, as the pope has done. Let it simply be your aim to set forth distinctly the advantages and losses, the wants and the benefits, the dangers and the blessings, connected with the Sacrament; the people will, doubtless, then seek it without urgent demands on your part. If they still refuse to come forward, let them go their own way, and tell them that those who do not acknowledge their own spiritual misery, and do not desire the gracious help of God, belong to Satan. But if you do not give such solemn admonitions, or if you adopt odious compulsory laws on the subject, it is your own fault if the people treat the Sacrament with contempt. Will they not necessarily be slothful, if you are silent and sleep? Therefore consider the subject seriously, ye Pastors and Preachers! Our office has now assumed a very different character from that which it bore under the pope; it is now of a very grave nature, and is very salutary in its influence. It consequently subjects us to far greater burdens and labors, dangers and temptations, while it brings with it an inconsiderable reward, and very little gratitude in the world. But Christ Himself will be our reward, if we labor with fidelity. May He Who is the Father of all grace, grant unto us such mercy; and to Him be thanks and praise forever, through Jesus Christ, our Lord! Amen.

Die Zehen Gebot/ Wie ſie ein Haußvatter ſeinem Geſinde einfeltiglich fürhalten ſol.

Part I

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach them
to his household

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Andern Buch
Moſi / am xxxij. Cap.

Das Erſt Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht ander Götter haben.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT vber alle ding
fürchten/lieben vnd
vertrawen.

THE INTRODUCTION

I am the LORD thy God.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Dritten Buch
Moſi / am xxiiij. Cap.

Das II. Gebot.

Du ſolt den Namen deines GOTTES nicht vnnützlich füren.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnnd lieben / Das wir bey ſeinem Namen nicht fluchen / ſchweren / zeubern / liegen odder triegen / Sondern den ſelben inn allen nöten anruffen / beten / loben vnnd dancken.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, conjure, lie, or deceive, by His Name, but call upon Him in every time of need, and worship Him with prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Vierdten Buch
Moſi / am xv. Cap.

Das III. Gebot.

Du ſolt den Feiertag heiligen.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnnd lieben / Das wir die Predigt vnd ſein wort nicht verachten / Sondern daſſelbige heilig halten / gern hören vnd lernen.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not despise His Word and the preaching of the same, but deem it holy, and gladly hear and learn it.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Erſten Buch
Moſi/am ix. Cap.

Das IIII. Gebot.

Du ſolt deinen Vatter vnd deine Mutter ehren/
auff das dirs wol gehe/vnd lange lebeſt auff Erden.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnnd lieben/Das
wir vnſer Eltern vnd Herrn nicht verach-
ten noch erzörnen / Sondern ſie
in ehren halten/jnen dienen/
gehorchen/lieb vnnd
werd haben.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not despise our parents and superiors, nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love, and esteem them.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Erſten Buch
Moſi / am iiij. Cap.

Das V. Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht Tödten.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnd lieben / Das wir vnſerm Neheſten an ſeinem Leibe keinen ſchaden noch leid thun / Sondern jhm helffen vnnd fördern inn allen Leibs nöten.

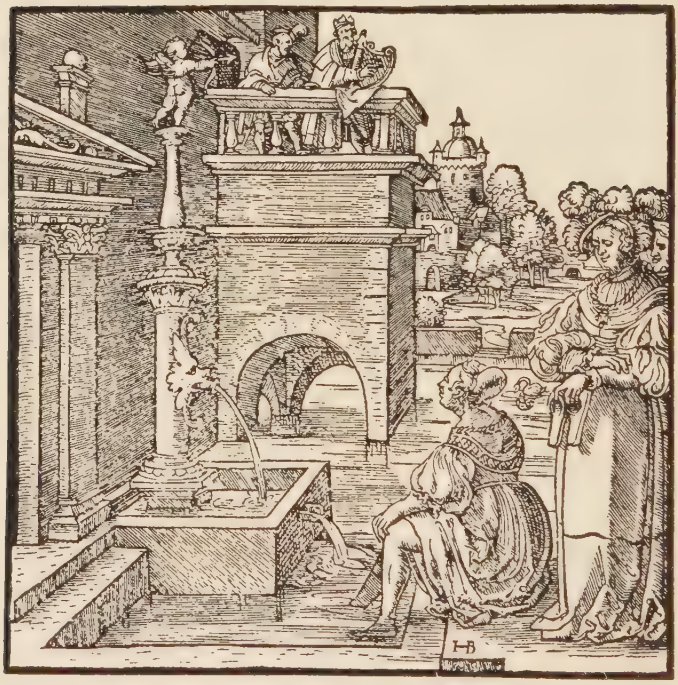
THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do our neighbor no bodily harm nor cause him any suffering, but help and befriend him in every need

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Andern Buch
Samuel/am xj. Cap.



Das VI. Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht Ehebrechen.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnd lieben / Das wir Keuſch vnd züchtig leben/in worten vnnd wercken/Vnd ein jeglicher ſein Gemahl lieben vnd ehren.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we lead a chaste and pure life in word and deed, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Buch
Joſua / am vij. Cap.

Das VII. Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht Stelen.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnd lieben / Das wir vnſers Neheſten Gelt odder gut nicht nemen / noch mit falſcher Wahr odder Handel an vns bringen / Sondern jhm ſein gut vnd narung helffen beſſern vnnd behüten.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not rob our neighbor of his money or property, nor bring them into our possession by unfair dealing or fraud, but help him to improve and protect his property and living.

Dieſe Figur ſteht in den Apocryphis/in ſtücken Danielis ꝛc.

Das VIII. Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht falſch zeugnis reden / wider deinen Neheſten.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnd lieben / Das wir vnſern Neheſten nicht felſchlich beliegen / verraten / Affterreden odder böſen Leumund machen / Sondern ſollen jn entſchüldigen vnd guts von jm reden / vnd alles zum beſten keren.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not deceitfully belie, betray, backbite, nor slander our neighbor, but apologize for him, speak well of him, and put the most charitable construction on all that he does.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Erſten Buch
Moſi / am xxx. Cap.

Das IX. Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht begeren deines Neheſten Hauß.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vndlieben / Das wir vnſerm Neheſten nicht mit liſt nach ſeinem Erbe odder Hauſe ſtehen / vnnd mit einem ſchein des rechts an vns bringen ꝛc. Sondern jm daſſelbige zu behalten förderlich vnnd dienſtlich ſein.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not seek by craftiness to gain possession of our neighbor's inheritance or home, nor obtain them under pretense of a legal right, but assist and serve him in keeping the same.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Erſten Buch Moſi / am xxxix. Cap.

Das X. Gebot.

Du ſolt nicht begeren deines Neheſten Weib / Knecht / Magd / Vihe / oder was ſein iſt.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir ſollen GOTT förchten vnd lieben / Das wir vnſerm Neheſten nicht ſein Weib / geſinde oder Vihe abſpannen / abdringen oder abwendig machen / Sondern die ſelbigen anhalten / Das ſie bleiben / vnd thun was ſie ſchüldig ſind.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not estrange or entice away our neighbor's wife, servants, or cattle, but seek to have them remain and discharge their duty to him.

THE CONCLUSION

What does God declare concerning all these Commandments?

Answer: He says: I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.

What does this mean?

Answer: God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. We should, therefore, fear His wrath, and in no wise disobey them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep them. We should, therefore, love Him, trust in Him, and gladly keep His commandments.

Der Glaube / Wie jn ein Haußvatter seinem Gesinde einfeltiglich fürhalten sol.

Part II

THE CREED

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach it
to his household

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Erſten Buch
Moſi/ am j. Cap.

Der Erſt Artickel/
Von der Schöpffung.

Ich gleube an GOTT den Vatter Allmechtigen Schöpffer Himels vnd der Erden.

THE FIRST ARTICLE
Of Creation

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that God has created me and all that exists; that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, my eyes and ears, and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul together with food

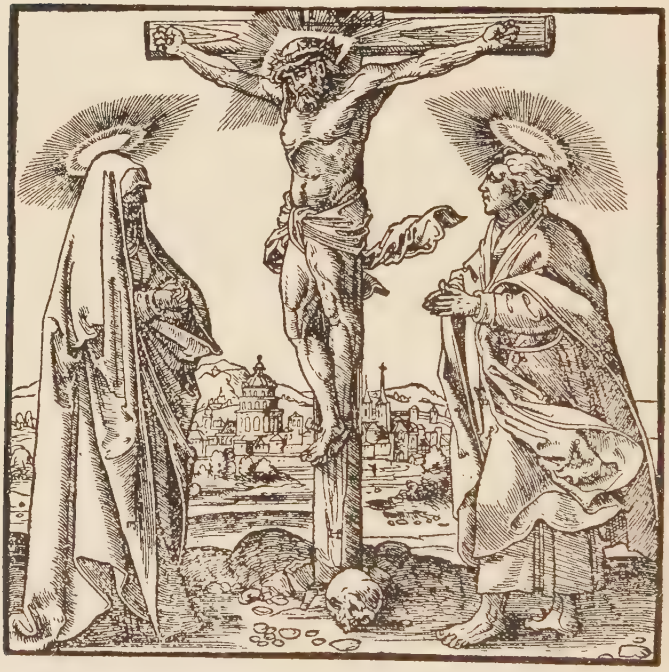
[*Continued on Page 95*]

THE FIRST ARTICLE
Of Creation

[*Continued from Page 93*]

and raiment, home and family, and all my property; that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life, protects me from all danger, and guards and keeps me from all evil; and that He does this purely out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I am in duty bound to thank, praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet Matthej am xxvij. Joh.
am xix. Luc. xxiij. Mar. xv.



Der II. Artickel/
Von der Erlöſung.

Vnnd an Jheſum Chriſtum / ſeinen einigen Son vnſern HERRN. Der empfangen iſt vom heiligen Geiſt / Geborn von der Jungfrawen Maria. Gelitten vnter Pontio Pilato / Gecreutziget / Geſtorben vnd begraben / Nidergefaren zur Hellen. Am dritten tage auffer ſtanden vonn den Todten / Auffgefaren gen Himel. Sitzend zu der Rechten Gottes des Allmechtigen Vaters. Von dannen er

THE SECOND ARTICLE
Of Redemption

And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

[*Continued on Page 99*]

THE SECOND ARTICLE
Of Redemption

[*Continued from Page 97*]

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; even as He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet inn Actis / amij. Cap.

Der III. Artickel/

Von der Heiligung.

Ich gleube an den heiligen Geiſt. Eine heilige Chriſtliche Kirche. Die Gemeine der Heiligen. Vergebung der Sünden. Aufferſtehung des Fleiſches. Vnd ein ewiges leben/Amen.

THE THIRD ARTICLE
Of Sanctification

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my

[*Continued on Page 103*]

THE THIRD ARTICLE
Of Sanctification

[*Continued from Page 101*]

Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Das Vatter vnſer/

Wie ein Hauſzvatter daſſelbige ſeinem Geſind auffs einfeltigeſt für halten ſol.

Part III

THE LORD'S PRAYER

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach it
to his household

Dieſe Figur ſtehet/Matthej am vj.
vnd Luce am xj. Cap.

Vatter vnſer/Der du biſt im Himel.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

GOTT wil damit vns locken / das wir gleuben ſollen/Er ſey vnſer rechter Vatter / vnd wir ſeine rechte Kinder. Auff das wir getroſt vnd mit aller zuuerſicht jhn bitten ſollen / Wie die lieben Kinder jren lieben Vatter.

THE INTRODUCTION

Our Father, Who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer: God thereby tenderly encourages us to believe that He is truly our Father, and that we are truly His children, so that we may boldly and confidently come to Him in prayer, even as beloved children come to their dear father.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im newen Teſtament/
Matth. am v. vnd Lu. vij.

Die Erſte Bitte.

Geheiliget werde dein Name.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Gottes Name iſt zwar an jm ſelbs heilig. Aber wir bittē in dieſem gebet/das er bey vns auch heilig werde.

Wie geſchicht das? Antwort.

Wo das Wort Gottes lauter vnnd rein geleret wird/vñ wir auch heilig/als die kinder Gottes darnach leben. Des hilff vns lieber Vater im Himmel.

Wer aber anders leret vñ lebet/deñ dz wort Gottes leret/der entheiliget vnter vns den Namē Gottes/Da behüt vns für Himliſcher Vater.

THE FIRST PETITION

Hallowed be Thy Name.

What does this mean?

Answer: God's Name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be hallowed also among us.

How is this done?

Answer: When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and we, as God's children, lead holy lives, in accordance with it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven! But whoever teaches and lives otherwise than as God's Word teaches, profanes the Name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father!

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Euangeliſta Lu-
ca / am xj. Cap.

Die II. Bitte.

Dein Reich kome.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

GOttes Reich kompt wol on vnſer Gebet von jhm ſelbs. Aber wir bitten inn dieſem Gebet/ Das auch zu vns kome.

Wie geſchicht das? Antwort.

Wenn der Himliſche Vatter / vns ſeinen heiligen Geiſt gibt/ das wir ſeinem heiligen wort/ durch ſeine gnade gleuben/ vnd Göttlich leben/ hie zeitlich vnd dort ewiglich.

THE SECOND PETITION

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

Answer: The kingdom of God comes indeed of itself, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may also come to us.

How is this done?

Answer: When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word, and live a godly life here on earth, and in heaven for ever.

Dieſe Figur iſt genomen auß dem newen Teſtament / Matth. am xxvj. Cap.

Die III. Bitte.

Dein Wille geſchehe / wie im Himel alſo auch auff Erden.

Was iſt das?

Antwort.

GOTTES guter gnediger Wille geſchicht wol on vnſer Gebet. Aber wir bitten inn dieſem Gebet / das er auch bey vns geſchehe.

THE THIRD PETITION

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer: The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may also be done among us.

How is this done?

Answer: When God destroys and brings to naught every evil counsel and purpose of the devil, the world, and our own flesh, which would hinder us from hallowing His Name, and prevent the coming of His kingdom; and when He strengthens us and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in faith, even unto our end. This is His good and gracious will.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Newen Teſta-
ment/Johan.am vj. Cap.

Die IIII. Bitte.

Vnſer teglich Brod gib vns heute.

Was iſt das?

Antwort.

GOTT gibt teglich Brod auch wol on vnſer Bitte / allen böſen Menſchen. Aber wir bitten inn dieſem Gebet/das er vns erkennen laſſe / vnnd mit danckſagung empfahen vnſer teglich Brod.

THE FOURTH PETITION

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

Answer: God indeed gives daily bread to all men, even to the wicked, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to acknowledge our daily bread as His gift, and to receive it with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread?

Answer: Everything that is required to satisfy our bodily needs; such as food and raiment, house and home, fields and flocks, money and goods; pious parents, children and servants; godly and faithful rulers, good government; seasonable weather, peace and health; order and honor; true friends, good neighbors, and the like.

Dieſe Figur ſtehet im Newen Teſtament/
Matth. am xviij. Cap.

Die V. Bitte.

Vnd verlaſſe vnns vnſer ſchulde / Als wir verlaſſen vnſern ſchüldigern.

THE FIFTH PETITION

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

Answer: We pray in this petition, that our heavenly Father would not regard our sins nor because of them deny our prayers; for we neither merit, nor deserve those things for which we pray; but that He would grant us all things through grace, even though we sin daily, and deserve nothing but punishment. And certainly we, on our part, will heartily forgive, and gladly do good to those who may sin against us.

Dieſe Figur iſt genomen auß dem newen Teſtament / Matth. am iiij. Cap.

Die VI. Bitte.

Vnd füre vns nicht in verſuchung.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

GOtt verſucht zwar niemand. Aber wir bitten in dieſem Gebet/ Das vns Gott wolt behüten vnd erhalten/ Auff das vns der Teuffel/ die Welt / vnd vnſer Fleiſch/ nicht betriege vnnd verfüre/ inn mißglauben/ verzweiffeln/ vnd ander groſſe ſchande vñ laſter. Vnd ob wir damit angefochten würden / das wir doch entlich gewinnen vnd den ſieg behalten.

THE SIXTH PETITION

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

Answer: God indeed tempts no one to sin; but we pray in this petition that God would so guard and preserve us, that the devil, the world, and our own flesh, may not deceive us, nor lead us into error and unbelief, despair, and other great and shameful sins; but that, when so tempted, we may finally prevail and gain the victory.

Dieſe Figur iſt genomen auß dem newen Teſtament Matth. am xv. Cap.

Die VII. Bitte.

Sondern erlöſe vns von dem vbel.

Was iſt das? Antwort.

Wir bitten in dieſem Gebet/als in der ſumma/Dz vnns der Vater im Himel/von allerley übel/Leibs vnnd Seele/Guts vnnd Ehre erlöſe. Vnnd zu letſt/ wenn vnſer ſtündlin kompt/ein ſeliges ende beſchere / vnnd mit gnaden von dieſem Jamerthal zu ſich neme in den Himel.

THE SEVENTH PETITION

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

Answer: We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our heavenly Father would deliver us from all manner of evil, whether it affect the body or soul, property or reputation. and at last, when the hour of death shall come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

THE CONCLUSION

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

What does the word "Amen" mean?

Answer: It means that I should be assured that such petitions are acceptable to our heavenly Father, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this manner, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, Yea, yea, it shall be so.

Das Sacrament der heiligen Tauffe/Wie das selbige ein Haußvatter seinem Gesinde sol einfeltiglich fürhalten.

Part IV

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach it
to his household

Dieſe Figur iſt genomen auß dem newen Teſtament / Matth. am iij. Cap.

Was iſt die Tauffe?
Antwort.

Die Tauffe iſt nicht allein ſchlecht Waſſer/ Sondern ſie iſt das Waſſer in Gottes gebot gefaſſet/ vnd mit Gottes wort verbunden.

I.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Answer: Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water used according to God's command and connected with God's word.

What is this word of God?

Answer: It is the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

II.

WHAT GIFTS OR BENEFITS DOES BAPTISM BESTOW?

Answer: It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe, as the word and promise of God declare.

What is this word and promise of God?

Answer: It is the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in the last chapter of Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

III.

HOW CAN WATER DO SUCH GREAT THINGS?

Answer: It is not the water, indeed, that does such great things, but the word of God, connected with the water, and our faith which relies on that word of God. For without the word of God, it is simply water and no baptism. But when connected with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says to Titus, in the third chapter: "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying."

IV.

WHAT DOES SUCH BAPTIZING WITH WATER SIGNIFY?

Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil lusts, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and be put to death; and that the new man should daily come forth and rise, to live before God in righteousness and holiness for ever.

Where is it so written?

Answer: St. Paul, in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, says: "We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

OF CONFESSION

What is Confession?

Answer: Confession consists of two parts: the one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution or forgiveness from the pastor as from God Himself, in no wise doubting, but firmly believing, that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in Heaven.

What sins should we confess?

Answer: Before God we should acknowledge ourselves guilty of all manner of sins, even of those of which we are not aware, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. To the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

What are such sins?

Answer: Here examine yourself in the light of the Ten Commandments, whether as father or mother, son or daughter, master or servant you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful, ill-tempered, unchaste, or quarrelsome, or whether you have injured any one by word or deed, stolen, neglected or wasted aught, or done any other evil.

Das Sacrament des Altars / Wie ein Haußvatter das selbige seinem Gesinde einfeltiglich fürhalten sol.

Part V

THE SACRAMENT of the ALTAR

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach it
to his household

Dieſe Figur ſtehet beſchrieben Matth. xxvj.
Mar. xiiij. Luce xxij. j. Corinth. xj.

Was iſt das Sacrament des Altars?

Antwort.

Es iſt der ware Leib vnd Blut vnſers HERRN JHeſu Chriſti/ vnter dem Brod vnnd Wein/ Vns Chriſten zu eſſen vnnd trincken/ vonn Chriſto ſelbs eingeſetzt.

I.

WHAT IS THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR?

Answer: It is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given unto us Christians to eat and to drink, as it was instituted by Christ Himself.

[*Continued on Page 136*]

WHAT IS THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR?

[*Continued from Page 135*]

Where is it so written?

Answer: The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, together with St. Paul, write thus:

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.

"After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."

II.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF SUCH EATING AND DRINKING?

Answer: It is pointed out in these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." Through these words the remission of sins, life and salvation are given unto us in the Sacrament; for where there is remission of sins, there is also life and salvation.

III.

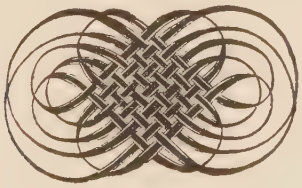
HOW CAN THE BODILY EATING AND DRINKING PRODUCE SUCH GREAT BENEFITS?

Answer: The eating and drinking, indeed, do not produce them, but the words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." For besides the bodily eating and drinking, these words are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he who believes them, has what they say and declare, namely, the remission of sins.

IV.

WHO, THEN, RECEIVES THE SACRAMENT WORTHILY?

Answer: Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a good outward discipline, but he is truly worthy and well prepared who believes these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." But he who does not believe these words or who doubts them, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words: "For you," require truly believing hearts.



Wie ein Haußvatter sein Geſinde ſoll leren / Morgens vnnd Abends ſich ſegenen.

MORNING and EVENING PRAYER

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach it
to his household

MORNING

In the Morning, when thou risest, thou shalt make the sign of the holy cross, and thou shalt say:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then, kneeling or standing, thou shalt say the Apostles' Creed *and the* Lord's Prayer.

Then mayest thou say this Prayer:

I give thanks unto Thee, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Thy dear Son, that Thou hast protected me through the night from all danger and harm; and I beseech Thee to preserve and keep me, this day also, from all sin and evil; that in all my thoughts, words, and deeds, I may serve and please Thee. Into Thy hands I commend my body and soul, and all that is mine. Let Thy holy angel have charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. *Amen.*

And then shouldst thou go with joy to thy work, after a Hymn, or the Ten Commandments, *or whatever thy devotion may suggest.*

EVENING

In the Evening, when thou goest to bed, thou shalt make the sign of the holy cross, and thou shalt say:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then, kneeling or standing, thou shalt say the Apostles' Creed *and the* Lord's Prayer.

Then mayest thou say this Prayer:

I give thanks unto Thee, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Thy dear Son, that Thou hast this day so graciously protected me, and I beseech Thee to forgive me all my sins and the wrong which I have done, and by Thy great mercy defend me from all the perils and dangers of this night. Into Thy hands I commend my body and soul, and all that is mine. Let Thy holy angel have charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. *Amen.*

And then lie down in peace, and sleep.

Wie ein Haußvatter sein Geſinde ſol leren/das Benedicite vnnd Gratias ſprechen.

Blessing and Thanksgiving at Table

In the plain form in which the head
of the family shall teach them
to his household

BEFORE MEAT

Before meat, the members of the family standing at the table reverently and with folded hands, there shall be said:

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord: and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer, *and after that this Prayer:*

O Lord God heavenly Father, bless unto us these Thy gifts, which of Thy tender kindness Thou hast bestowed upon us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

AFTER MEAT

After meat, all standing reverently and with folded hands, there shall be said:

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever. He giveth food to all flesh; He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him: in those that hope in His mercy.

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer, *and after that this Prayer:*

We give thanks unto Thee, O God our Father, for all Thy benefits, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who with Thee liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Die Haußtafel etlicher Sprüche / für allerley heilige Orden vnnd Stende / dadurch die selbigen als durch eigen Lection jhres Ampts vnnd Dienſts zu ermanen.

TABLE OF DUTIES

Certain Scripture passages for various holy orders and estates

BISHOPS, PASTORS AND PREACHERS

A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; not a novice, but holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. *1 Tim. 3:2-6; Tit. 1:6-9.*

WHAT DUTIES HEARERS OWE THEIR PASTORS

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. *1 Cor. 9:14.*

Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. *Gal. 6:6.*

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that

treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward. *1 Tim. 5:17. 18.*

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you. *Heb. 13:17.*

MAGISTRATES

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God; for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. *Rom. 13:1-4.*

WHAT DUTIES SUBJECTS OWE MAGISTRATES

Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. *Matt. 22:21.*

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, etc. Wherefore ye must needs be sub-

ject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. *Rom. 13:1. 5-7.*

I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. *1 Tim. 2:1. 2.*

Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, etc. *Tit. 3:1.*

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent, etc. *1 Pet. 2:13.*

HUSBANDS

Ye husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. *1 Pet. 3:7.*

And be not bitter against them. *Col. 3:19.*

WIVES

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. *Eph. 5:22; 1 Pet. 3:6.*

PARENTS

Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. *Eph. 6:4.*

CHILDREN

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. *Eph. 6:1-3.*

MALE AND FEMALE SERVANTS, AND LABORERS

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers;

but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. *Eph. 6:5-8.*

MASTERS AND MISTRESSES

Ye masters, do the same thing unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him. *Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1.*

YOUNG PERSONS, IN GENERAL

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. *1 Pet. 5:5. 6.*

WIDOWS

She that is a widow indeed, and desolate trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day; but she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. *1 Tim. 5:5. 6*

CHRISTIANS, IN GENERAL

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Herein are comprehended all the commandments. *Rom. 13:9. 10.*

And persevere in prayer for all men. *1 Tim. 2:1. 2.*

Let each his lesson learn with care,
And all the household
well shall fare

POSTSCRIPT

The wish was expressed by the Intersynodical Committee that an illustrated edition of Luther's Small Catechism should be one of the publications commemorating the four hundredth anniversary of its publication, and the selection of the proper illustrations was left to the undersigned. Two possibilities suggested themselves: either the selection of some modern set of illustrations or else the choice of one of the series that had appeared in the sixteenth century. The original decision was for the first alternative and negotiations were begun with the publishers of Rudolf Schaefer's illustrations for the Catechism. For various reasons, however, this plan proved impracticable and so I decided in favor of illustrations taken from one of the early editions. Among the illustrated editions of the sixteenth century only one merited serious consideration, that published by Hermann Guelfferich, at Frankfort on the Main, in 1553, with the pictures by Hans Brosamer. The illustrations of the earlier editions were all of inferior quality. The original of the Frankfort edition, in folio, I had in hand as early as 1903. In the following year Knoke published these pictures, in reduced form, in his edition of the Small Catechism "in the oldest editions in High German, Low German and Latin." In January of this year they were used by the publishers of the Berlin Jubilee Edition. The Holbein Society of England had issued them in facsimile in 1892 and a copy of this edition is also in my possession. With few exceptions, the accompanying illustrations have been reproduced from the latter publication.

The pictures are often startlingly realistic but they serve to produce a vivid impression of the life of that century in which the Catechism appeared.

—M. Reu.